

# State Street Global High Yield Bond Screened Index Fund

## Duurzaamheidsinformatie voor artikel 8-fonds - website



### A. Samenvatting

Het State Street Global High Yield Bond Screened Index Fund (“**Fonds**”) is een indexfonds dat de prestaties volgt van de ICE BofA Global High Yield Constrained Index (“**Index**”), terwijl effecten worden uitgesloten op basis van een beoordeling van hun naleving van ESG-criteria die worden bepaald door de beleggingsbeheerder.

Dit financiële product promoot ecologische of sociale kenmerken, maar heeft geen duurzame beleggingsdoelstelling.

De ecologische en sociale kenmerken die het fonds promoot worden gebaseerd op een negatieve en op normen gebaseerde screening die wordt toegepast op de portefeuille van het fonds om effecten uit te sluiten op basis van een beoordeling van hun naleving van ESG-criteria, d.w.z. internationale normen inzake ecologische en sociale bescherming.

Het beleggingsbeleid van het fonds is het zo nauwkeurig mogelijk volgen van de prestaties van de index met behulp van een gelaagde steekproefstrategie, zoals nader beschreven in hoofdstuk 8.1 van het prospectus en het relevante supplement en in paragraaf J hieronder, en de tracking error tussen de prestaties van het fonds en die van de index zo veel mogelijk te minimaliseren, waarbij effecten worden uitgesloten op basis van hun naleving van bepaalde ESG-criteria. Het fonds streeft ernaar een representatieve portefeuille samen te stellen die op de meest efficiënte wijze de risico- en rendementskenmerken van de toepasselijke index evenaart, met inbegrip van, maar niet beperkt tot, risico's in verband met valuta's, landen, sectoren, kwaliteit, looptijd en emittenten. Dit betekent dat een fonds dat deze strategie toepast normaal gesproken slechts een deelverzameling aanhoudt van de effecten die in de index zijn opgenomen.

De vermogensbeheerder hanteert een bindende ESG-methodologie met als doel een portefeuille samen te stellen waarin minstens 90% van de activa van het fonds is belegd in effecten die afgestemd zijn op de door het fonds gepromote ecologische en sociale kenmerken. Het restant (<10%) van de portefeuille, bestaande uit contanten en equivalente middelen die naar het inzicht van de vermogensbeheerder worden aangehouden, zal niet op de gepromote ecologische en sociale kenmerken afgestemd zijn. Voor zover het fonds financiële derivaten kan gebruiken, worden deze niet gebruikt om de door het fonds gepromote ecologische of sociale kenmerken te bereiken.

Het fonds verbindt zich niet om duurzame beleggingen te verrichten in de zin van de SFDR of de Taxonomieverordening.

Het behalen van de ecologische en sociale kenmerken wordt gemeten via het percentage van de portefeuille dat is belegd in effecten die zijn opgenomen in de negatieve en op normen gebaseerde screening.

Het beleggingsbeleid van het fonds is erop gericht om beleggers een rendement te bieden dat in lijn is met het rendement van de index, waarbij effecten worden uitgesloten op basis van een beoordeling van hun naleving van ESG-criteria die worden bepaald door de beleggingsbeheerder. In het bijzonder wordt een negatieve en op normen gebaseerde screening toegepast op de portefeuille van het fonds op basis van de volgende uitsluitingscriteria:

- controversiële wapens;
- schendingen van het Global Compact van de VN (“**UNGC**”);
- thermische kolen;
- boringen in het noordpoolgebied;
- olie- en teerzanden;
- ernstige ESG-controverses;
- civiele vuurwapens; en
- tabak.

Het fonds gebruikt gegevens van MSCI en Sustainalytics voor de ESG-scherming. SSGA voert een doorlopend due diligence proces uit met betrekking tot ESG-dataverstrekkingen dat resulteert in regelmatige rapporten over de kwaliteit van de gegevens en kan in gesprek gaan met de betreffende dataverstrekkingen over eventuele problemen die door de SSGA-teams worden vastgesteld.

ESG-gegevens kunnen op bepaalde aannames, voorspellingen, prognoses, visies en opinies zijn gebaseerd, die op huidige markttrends of verwachte toekomstige gebeurtenissen gebaseerd kunnen zijn. Gezien de aard van gegevensmodellen, methodologieën en aannames, die in ontwikkeling en innovatief zijn, en de inherente onzekerheid bij het voorspellen van toekomstige gebeurtenissen, kan niet worden gegarandeerd dat de ESG-gegevens altijd nauwkeurig of juist zijn of dat de ESG-gegevens voldoen aan de doelen of vereisten van een specifieke klant of belegger. Bovendien is het mogelijk dat er geen gegevens beschikbaar zijn door het ontbreken van databronnen.

Het engagementbeleid van SSGA is niet rechtstreeks in de beleggingsstrategie van het fonds geïntegreerd. Het Asset Stewardship-programma van SSGA brengt echter alle stem- en engagementactiviteiten voor alle activaklassen samen, ongeacht de beleggingsstrategie of geografische regio, inclusief voor het fonds.

**Meer en uitgebreidere informatie vindt u in de betreffende delen hieronder, het prospectus en het betreffende supplement.**



## **B. No sustainable investment objective**

The Fund promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective a sustainable investment.



## **C. Environmental or social characteristics of the financial product**

The environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Fund is a negative and norms-based screen applied to the portfolio of the Fund to screen out issuers based on an assessment of their adherence to ESG criteria, i.e. international norms in relation to environmental and social protection. Specifically, the Fund promotes certain environmental characteristics through exclusion of investments in companies which violate UNGC principles relating to environment (Principles 7 to 9) and which are active in thermal coal, arctic oil & gas exploration, and oil sands extraction.

The Fund also promotes certain social characteristics through exclusion of investments in companies which violate UNGC Principles relating to human rights (Principles 1 and 2), labour standards (Principles 3 to 6), anti-corruption (Principle 10) and companies associated with controversial weapons, civilian firearms and tobacco. The UNGC Principles is the world largest corporate sustainability initiative aimed at companies to align their strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals. The Fund may use additional ESG screens from time to time in order to exclude securities based on their involvement with an activity that is deemed non-compliant with one or more of such ESG criteria.

For further details of the exclusions applied by the Investment Manager at any time please refer to Section G below.



## D. Investment Strategy

The investment policy of the Fund is to track the performance of the Index as closely as possible using the Stratified Sampling Strategy, as further described in section 8.1 of the Prospectus and the Relevant Supplement and in Section J below, while seeking to minimise as far as possible the tracking difference between the Fund's performance and that of the Index while screening out securities based on an assessment of their adherence to certain ESG criteria. The Fund will seek to build a representative portfolio that matches the risk and return characteristics of the applicable Index in the most efficient way, including, but not limited to, risks related to currencies, countries, sectors, quality, maturity duration and issuers. Consequently, a Fund using this strategy will typically hold only a subset of the securities included in the Index.

In implementing this strategy, securities in the Fund are selected primarily from the constituents of the Index and the Investment Manager applies the negative and norms-based ESG screen prior to the construction of the portfolio of the Fund and on an ongoing basis. This results in the exclusion of any securities from the portfolio based on an assessment of their adherence to certain ESG criteria defined by the Investment Manager. The Fund will screen out securities of issuers that fail to comply with UNGC principles relating to environmental protection, human rights, labour standards and anti-corruption or are associated with Severe ESG Controversies, controversial weapons, civilian firearms, tobacco, thermal coal, arctic oil & gas exploration and oil sands extraction. The Fund may use additional ESG screens from time to time in order to exclude securities of issuers based on their involvement with an activity that is deemed non-compliant with one or more of such ESG criteria.

The assessment of good governance practices is implemented through the negative screening utilised by the Fund. Companies deemed by the Investment Manager to not violate UNGC principles are considered to exhibit good governance.



## **E. Proportion of investments**

The Investment Manager employs a binding ESG methodology which aims to build a portfolio where at least 90% of the Fund's assets are invested in securities which are aligned with environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Fund. The remaining portion (<10%) of the portfolio, consisting of cash as well as cash equivalents in place held at the Investment Manager's discretion, will not be aligned with the promoted environmental and social characteristics.

To the extent that the Fund may use financial derivative instruments, these will not be used to attain the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Fund.

The Fund does not commit to making sustainable investments within the meaning of the SFDR or the Taxonomy Regulation.



## **F. Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics**

The attainment of the environmental characteristics is measured through the % of the portfolio invested in securities that are included in the negative and norms-based screen specifically related to environmental characteristics, namely companies violating UNGC principles in regards to the environment and which are active in thermal coal, arctic oil & gas exploration and oil sands extraction.

The attainment of the social characteristics is measured through the % of the portfolio invested in securities that are included in the negative and norms-based screen specifically related to social characteristics, namely companies violating UNGC principles and companies associated with controversial weapons, civilian firearms and tobacco.

The environmental and social characteristics are embedded in the investment policy of the Fund and the associated sustainability indicators are monitored by the Investment Manager through its investment oversight program including pre- and post-trade compliance monitoring for ESG screens and regular reviews by a sub-committee of the Investment Manager.



## **G. Methodologies**

The Fund is an index fund tracking the performance of the Index while screening out securities based on an assessment of their adherence to certain ESG criteria defined by the Investment Manager as detailed below.

The Index measures the performance of the below investment grade corporate debt publicly issued in the major domestic or Eurobond markets. The Index limits issuer exposure to a maximum of 2% and redistributes the excess market value Index-wide on a pro-rata basis.

### **ESG Screens**

The ESG screens applied to the Fund include the following:

- 1 Controversial Weapons
- 2 UNGC Violations
- 3 Thermal Coal
- 4 Arctic Drilling
- 5 Oil and Tar Sands
- 6 Severe ESG Controversies
- 7 Civilian Firearms
- 8 Tobacco

Further details on the methodologies used for the ESG screens is as follows:

1. **Controversial Weapons:** Companies with focused involvement in the following controversial weapons are excluded.

**Landmines** Landmines are explosives that are designed to detonate at the presence, proximity or contact of a person or vehicle. After being planted, antipersonnel mines can remain undetonated for years, posing a serious risk to civilians after a conflict has ended.

**Biological and chemical weapons** Biological or chemical weapons are munitions that utilize pathogens such as viruses, bacteria, and disease-causing biological agents, toxins, or chemical substances that have toxic properties, to inflict death or harm. Either type can be dispersed in gas, liquid, or solid forms. As these munitions are based on organisms or chemicals, civilians are often unintended victims since the impact zone is constrained only by how far the particles can disperse. For biological weapons, person-to-person transmission of the illness can further exacerbate the civilian impact.

**Cluster weapons** Cluster weapons are air-dropped explosives: bombs, missiles, rockets, or shells that carry sub munitions and disperse them over an area. The sub munitions have a wide impact zone, and often remain undetonated on the ground. These munitions can remain dangerous for years after the conflict has ended, posing a serious risk to civilians.

**Depleted Uranium** Depleted Uranium (DU) munitions are projectiles (bullets, rockets, etc.) that have been equipped with the radioactive chemical substance DU, a byproduct of the uranium enrichment process used to make nuclear weapons and nuclear-reactor fuel. Because of its high density, DU is often used as a penetrator in ammunition to help pierce armor. However, areas where depleted uranium munitions have been used are exposed to its radioactive qualities, causing people living in the area to be more prone to cancers, congenital birth defects, and other illnesses.

**Nuclear Weapons** A nuclear weapon is a device that is capable of releasing nuclear energy in an uncontrolled manner, due to fusion and/or fission reactions, making it a highly destructive explosive. The indiscriminate and disproportionate impact on civilians makes nuclear weapons a controversial weapon.

**White Phosphorus** White phosphorus (WP) is an allotrope of the chemical element phosphorus, which burns fiercely when exposed to oxygen. A WP munition is any projectile (eg flares, grenades, or mortars) that is equipped with WP, in order to act as a smoke-producing agent, or as tracer, illumination, or incendiary munition.

2. **UNGC Principles:** Companies directly complicit in violations of core international norms and conventions, as described in the UNGC Principles are excluded.

The UNGC is the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative with 13,000 participants from 170 countries. It consists of a set of internationally recognized principles that encompass important issues, such as human rights, labour, the environment, and anti-corruption practices. The 10 principles are as follows:

### **Human Rights**

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**Principle 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

### **Labour**

**Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

**Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

**Environment**

**Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

**Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

**Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

**Anti-Corruption**

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

3. **Thermal Coal:** Companies involved in the extraction or power generation of thermal coal are excluded.
4. **Arctic Drilling:** Companies involved in oil and gas exploration in the Arctic regions are excluded.
5. **Oil and Tar Sands:** Companies for whom a meaningful portion of their average daily production comes from oil sands are excluded.
6. **Severe ESG Controversies:** Companies involved in incidents/events that may pose business or reputational risk due to the potential impact on stakeholders, the environment, or the company's operations are excluded.
7. **Civilian Firearms:** Companies involved in the manufacturing and/or retailing of small arms and associated ammunition/components for civilian use are excluded.
8. **Tobacco:** Companies with direct involvement in the production/manufacturing of tobacco are excluded.

The exclusion list generated by the ESG screening process is updated once per quarter.

The ESG screen methodology and screening criteria applied to the Fund are subject to SSGA's governance approval process.



## H. Data sources and processing

The Fund utilises the following data sources to derive the ESG screens:

**Controversial Weapons** State Street Global Advisors receives universe-level data from two ESG screening data providers: Sustainalytics and MSCI. A screen is then applied to the data to generate lists from each data provider of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee. Companies are excluded if they appear on either or both of the lists from the two data providers.

**UNGC Violations** Data is sourced from Sustainalytics. A screen is then applied to the data to generate a list of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee

**Thermal Coal** Data is sourced from Sustainalytics. A screen is then applied to the data to generate a list of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee.

**Arctic Drilling** Data is sourced from Sustainalytics. A screen is then applied to the data to generate a list of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee.

**Oil and Tar Sands** Data is sourced from Sustainalytics. A screen is then applied to the data to generate a list of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee.

**Severe ESG Controversies** Data is sourced from Sustainalytics. A screen is then applied to the data to generate a list of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee

**Civilian Firearms** State Street Global Advisors receives universe-level data from two ESG screening data providers: Sustainalytics and MSCI. A screen is then applied to the data to generate lists from each data provider of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee. Companies are excluded if they appear on either or both of the lists from the two data providers.

**Tobacco** State Street Global Advisors receives universe-level data from two ESG screening data providers: Sustainalytics and MSCI. A screen is then applied to the data to generate lists from each data provider of excluded securities for this category. State Street Global Advisors determines the parameters that define the screen which are then approved by the firm's Investment Committee. Companies are excluded if they appear on either or both of the lists from the two data providers.

SSGA receives ESG data from a wide variety of data providers covering various themes including, but not limited to, climate, controversies and governance and leverages multisource data architecture for the analysis and dissemination of ESG data.

SSGA implements an ongoing due diligence process in relation to ESG data providers resulting in regular data quality reports. Such process tracks correlation and coverage dimensions of key ESG and climate metrics and scores between a selection of data providers over time for the covered



universe. SSGA may engage with the relevant data providers in relation to any data issues identified by the SSGA teams.



## I. Limitations to methodologies and data

ESG data may be based on certain assumptions, forecasts, projections, views and opinions which may be based on current market trends or anticipated future events. To assess company involvement in different activities and to estimate revenue shares as accurately as possible, data providers strive to obtain information directly from companies and issuers. Sources of data include annual reports, regulatory filings, sustainability reports, press releases, investor presentations, company websites, and other company disclosures. Given the developing and innovative nature of data models, methodologies and assumptions and the inherent uncertainty in predicting forward-looking events, it cannot be guaranteed that the ESG data is always accurate or correct or that the ESG data will satisfy the aims or requirements of any specific client or investor. Furthermore, there may be data that cannot be sourced due to the lack of availability of data sources.



## J. Due diligence

The investment policy of the Fund is to track the performance of the Index as closely as possible using the Stratified Sampling Strategy, as further described in section 8.1 of the Prospectus and the Relevant Supplement, while seeking to minimise as far as possible the tracking difference between the Fund's performance and that of the Index while screening out securities based on an assessment of their adherence to certain ESG criteria.

This index strategy seeks to build a representative portfolio that matches the risk and return characteristics of the Index in the most efficient way, including, but not limited to, risks related to currencies, countries, sectors, quality, maturity duration and issuers. Stratified sampling is typically used because the Index contains too many securities to efficiently purchase and, at times, certain securities included in that index may be difficult, or too costly, to purchase in the open markets. Consequently, a Fund using this strategy will typically hold only a subset of the securities included in the Index. The Investment Manager employs a negative and norms-based screen prior to the construction of the portfolio and on an ongoing basis.



**K. Engagement policies**

**Is engagement part of the environmental or social investment strategy?**

- Yes
- No

While SSGA engagement policies are not directly embedded into the Fund’s investment strategy, for SSGA the informed exercise of voting rights coupled with targeted and value-driven engagement is the most effective mechanism of creating value and managing Sustainability Risk for the investors. SSGA’s Asset Stewardship programme consolidates all voting and engagement activities across asset classes, irrespective of investment strategy or geographic region. The engagement strategy is built on SSGA’s ability to prioritise and allocate resources to companies and issues that have the greatest potential impact. SSGA’s Asset Stewardship programme is underpinned by 3 separate pillars, that is, (i) providing information and guidance to investee companies on the development of ESG practices across key issues, (ii) engaging with portfolio companies to encourage transparent, accountable, high performing boards and companies, and (iii) by exercising voting rights in a manner that reflects long term investment objectives for the purpose of influencing the activity or behaviour of the issuers. To support this process, SSGA has developed proprietary in-house tools to help identify companies for active engagement based on various financial and ESG indicators.



**L. Reference benchmark**

**Has a reference benchmark been designated for the purpose of attaining these characteristics promoted by the Fund?**

- Yes
- No

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